7 February 1966

Information on the National Photographic Interpretation Center for the DCI Briefing of the Mahon Committee

INTRODUCTION

One of the principal problems I want to discuss with you this morning is that of the exploitation of photography and specifically the future needs of the National Photographic Interpretation Center. NPIC serves as the single national level Center for the exploitation of photography acquired from the various aircraft and satellite reconnaissance collection programs in support of the national intelligence effort. The Center functions under my executive direction and is primarily manned by CIA with some DOD personnel assisting. It is currently housed in Building 213 of the Naval Weapons Plant, a former warehouse now converted into the most modern and complete photographic intelligence Center in the world.

CKGROUND
D MISSION

At NPIC, primary emphasis is placed on the immediate readout, analysis and reporting of satellite and aircraft photography. This first-phase reporting is accomplished on an around-the-clock basis and covers priority national

intelligence objectives. Second and third phase photographic interpretation follows in order to provide a complete index of the mission coverage and detailed interpretation of targets of priority national interest.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Beginning with the first overflights of the Soviet Union by the U2 in the summer of 1956, photographic analysis provided urgently needed information on the Soviet missile test sites, development and production of missiles, atomic energy development and production programs, the size and deployment of enemy military resources, detailed studies on industrial production complexes, and other items of priority national intelligence interest. The program was given further impetus in the summer of 1960 with the first successful recovery of satellite photography. The ability of NPIC to derive information from this photography spurred the collection efforts with the result that nearly all of the Soviet Union and much of the world has been successfully covered. We already have in our film repositories in the Washington area over 100 million linear feet of film collected from the various reconnaissance programs. Future efforts are being geared to provide the Center with higher quality and repetetive inputs on areas of critical concern to the national intelligence effort.

As you will recall, one of NPIC's most significant accomplishments was in connection with the Cuban Missile Crisis. It was here that the original Soviet missile threat was discovered and the word first flashed to the Director of Central Intelligence and the White House. Here is a picture on which the original find was made together with a shot of the missile as it appeared in a Moscow Parade. VUGRAPH 1

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VUGRAPH 2

You remember the great stir caused at the Paris Air Show by the new Soviet Transport, the largest aircraft in the world. Well before that demonstration we had obtained a satellite photograph, and later it was on this photograph that we saw for the first time that the Soviets had built 2 of these planes. On this one frame of satellite photography, both of them were caught on the ground at the same time at an aircraft plant at Tashkent. VUGRAPH 3

One more example of significant finds made by the Center includes the discovery of the Chinese development of a new G-Class submarine. Analysis of U2 and satellite photography confirmed that this G-Class SSB was constructed on the center building way of the old Darien shipbuilding company. This is just one example of our intensive effort to follow the Chinese Communist military buildup. VUGRAPH 4

Increasing emphasis is being placed on support of the Vietnamese effort, and thousands of feet of film are being received weekly of North and South Vietnam as well as Laos. Particular emphasis is given to searching out the infiltration routes, the surface-to-air threat to our bombing forces over North Vietnam and the possible introduction of surface-to-surface missiles.

Here is a shot of one of the principal routes in Laos, Mu Gia Pass, in which the photo interpreters were able to search out and find a new by-pass route to the south. Note the difficulty in discovering this new route. The first discovery of the surface-to-air missile threat in North Vietnam was discovered in April of 1965 by NPIC; and in spite of the fact that the photography is first read out in the field, 42% of the VUGRAPH 5

now known 64 SAM sites have been found by the Center through repetetive searches.

I have recently instigated a detailed search of North Vietnam for surface-to-surface missile implacements. In this effort we have divided North Vietnam into 5 priority zones and are conducting a detailed and painstaking search for any indications of the introduction of this weapons system into the area.

In all of these detailed studies, thousands of man-hours are required to search out and study not only the current inputs but all of the previous photography. In this way we chronologically chart the development of prime targets through comparative analysis and this problem becomes increasingly difficult as our data base expands.

FUTURE NEEDS

So far I have covered past and current developments. I am worried however about the future ability of the Center to handle its mounting workload in light of the new reconnaissance systems which will be in operation in the not too distant future delivering increased volumes of higher quality photography.

NPIC has developed a computer-oriented management information system which has enabled them to determine

the costs of exploiting the various reconnaissance systems as well as gauge the impact of new collection systems. NPIC is currently receiving inputs from 2 satellite systems, a search system known as KH-4 and a spotting system known as KH-7. In the 1967 - 68 period, the KH-7 spotting system is due to be replaced by a new spotting system known as KH-8, delivering a much higher quality film which will enable us to cover high priority intelligence targets in denied areas in unprecedented minute detail. In the 1968 - 69 period, the KH-4 search system is due to be replaced by a new search system known as KH-9, which will give us greatly increased volumes of photography at a much higher quality.

Here is a chart showing the relative impact of VUGRAPH 6 of these systems as developed by the NPIC management information system. This chart shows by system the number of manhours required for immediate exploitation per thousand feet of film for each of these reconnaissance systems. You can see from this chart in comparing KH-8 with KH-7, that it is estimated that twice the work effort will be required to exploit this new spotting system as is currently being expended to exploit the KH-7. When the KH-4 search system is replaced by the KH-9 system, there will also be a near doubling of the work effort to

exploit 1,000 feet of film, and this system will deliver much greater volumes than we are now receiving. Over on the right you can see the comparative work effort to exploit high and low level aircraft systems, although it must be remembered that we are receiving over 400 missions per month from this source and the rate is increasing due to the Vietnamese situation. In order to handle the existing workload as well as to go forth with new systems just over the horizon, we have already started a personnel buildup. We expect to have [redacted] people on board by the end of this fiscal year. 50X1

In FY 1967 NPIC has been given a personnel ceiling of [redacted] although we have indicated a need for [redacted] more. Total expenditures for the Center this fiscal year will run at about the [redacted] level, and we expect to invest about [redacted] next year. VUGRAPH 7 50X1 50X1 50X1 50X1

I am placing a great deal of emphasis on the R&D efforts of the Center in hopes of cutting back on their expanding manpower needs through automating the exploitation processes wherever possible. NPIC has planned a 5-year development program which will cover most facets of its operation and hopefully equip it to deal with the problems presented by the

currently planned new systems. The only way to eliminate people is to substitute electronic or mechanical devices which will perform the tasks. It is urgent that we press forward in this area as rapidly as possible although substantial investments will have to be made if we are to achieve our goals within the time limitations.

CONCLUSIONS

Gentlemen, I am convinced this effort must be given greater resources if we are to recognize the full intelligence potential of reconnaissance photography. We are zeroed in on the obvious strategic threat items but many other needs are being skimmed over. For example, voluminous photography over Communist China should be interpreted in detail to get at the essential facts and rate of growth of the economic base, particularly the industrial/agricultural fabric of this outspoken and increasingly belicose adversary of the U.S. Our knowledge of Soviet Air Defenses and Anti-Ballistic Missile developments and their current capability is critical to the whole U.S. War Plan, and we must monitor these developments at an ever-increasing pace and with steadily improving photo interpretation detail. In addition to their substantial ballistic missile fixed deployments the Soviets are parading their mobile missiles and openly challenging the U.S. ability to find them. If mobiles are being deployed, our photo interpreters

will have to extend their present detail searchings from the largely rail-supported areas to more remote expanses of the Soviet Union where camouflage and other deceptions might be anticipated to make the job even more difficult and time consuming.

We have not had enough photo interpreters and support personnel to complete these tasks involving thousands of manhours. Our Government has already expended millions of dollars in the development of reconnaissance collection systems. I repeat, if we are to realize the impact of current systems and new ones just over the horizon, the National Photographic Interpretation Center must be given additional resources in order to fully exploit these materials. We estimate our requirements by 1970 to call for [redacted] personnel and a budget in excess of [redacted] This is not too much to expend on this prolific source of vital information.

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ATTACHMENT

BRIEFING AIDS

Vugraph No.	Control No.	Copy No.
1	G 2159	
2	[redacted]	1
3	87808-65	49
4	J 6231	1
5	K 7006	
6	TCS-86399-65	2
7	K-2579-65	
8	TCS-1577-66	1

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